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NATIVITY AND OCCUPATION OF MEMBERS OF THE
MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATURE.*

By F. H. HOWLAND, S.B.

1. NATIVITY.

In view of the great change which is taking place in the character of the population of the country as to its immediate origin, an inquiry is undertaken in the following paper to determine how far citizens of foreign birth have engaged in public political life in the State of Massachusetts during the past half century. The material from which the statistics are gathered may be found in the State Library in Boston. The years 1847-64 are covered by *Poole's Register*; data for 1866-79 in the *Journal* of the House of Representatives; and for the remaining years there is abundant material in bound extracts from the *Boston Journal*. There is no record for the years previous to 1847 save in unpublished manuscripts, nor for the year 1865.

In the period under observation, 1847-91, there has been but one House, that of 1848, which consisted entirely of native-born members. The number of foreign-born representatives during this period ranged from one to twenty-six, the maximum being reached in 1881, 1883, and 1884. In 1891, the last year of the term under consideration, there were 19 of foreign birth out of a total representation of 240.

The Senate of Massachusetts is composed of forty members. There have been eleven years since 1846 when there were no foreign-born citizens in this body; seventeen, when there were but two; and one year, 1891, when the maximum number, five, was reached.

The maximum percentage of foreign-born in the House is

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10.8 in the years already referred to, 1881, 1883, and 1884; and in the Senate 12.5 in 1891. As might be presumed, the larger part of foreign-born members of the General Court, as the Massachusetts Legislature is termed, were born in England, Ireland, Scotland, and British colonies. Ireland has furnished by far the largest number, 274, or 55 per cent, of the foreign-born in the House, and 29 in the Senate. England comes next, with a total of 92 in the House and 12 in the Senate. Canada is credited with 58 in the House and 12 in the Senate; Scotland with 47 in the House and 6 in the Senate; and the British West Indies, Isle of Jersey, and Isle of Man, 6 in the House and one in the Senate.

Germany has sent fifteen; Holland, two; and France, Turkey, Switzerland, one each, to the House.

The changes which have taken place will be understood more clearly if the period 1846-91 be broken up into decades. This is done in the following table:—

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Years.	Total Number of Members in House Varied.	Average Number Returned Annually, Born in						
		Ireland.	England.	Canada.	Scotland.	Other English Possessions.	Other Foreign Countries.	Total.
1847-50	253-297	.0	.5	.1	.3	.1	.0	1.0
1851-60	240-401	.9	1.0	.5	.5	.1	.0	3.0
1861-70	240	3.8	1.4	.4	.8	.1	.2	6.7
1871-80	239-240	9.6	2.8	1.6	.6	.0	.6	15.2
1881-90	237-240	11.9	3.3	3.0	2.3	.3	1.0	21.8
1891	239	12.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	.0	2.0	20.0

Of course it must not be supposed that there were 274 different individuals born in foreign countries who during this period gained the distinction of a position in the General Court. The same person may have been returned, and probably was returned, several times, and some of those who are recorded as members of the House of Representatives are found in the list of the Senate. But this does not affect the

statistics for purposes of comparison, as the same fact is true of the native-born members.

The Senate statistics do not vary much from the above in the tendencies indicated. During the same periods, out of a total membership of forty, the foreign born have been as follows:—

SENATE.

Years.	Total Members.	Foreign Born.
1847-50	40	.1
1851-60	40	..
1861-70	40	1.5
1871-80	40	1.2
1881-90	40	2.1
1891	40	5.0

It will be observed that the great increase of foreign-born representatives took place in the decade 1871-80; and since then that the ratio has been quite constant. A further investigation showed that by far the larger number of the foreign born were returned for Boston districts, and had their residence in that city.

For a portion of the period over which the inquiry extended it was possible from the documents at hand to tabulate the political faith of the foreign-born members. In the years 1880-91, of the 146 representatives of Irish birth only 9 are credited to the Republican party, while 135 stand in the Democratic column. One is entered as a Greenbacker, and another in the People's party.

Of the 40 entries of English birth, however, 24 are in the Republican and 16 in the Democratic column. But about one-third of the members from Canada, Scotland, and other English possessions are enrolled as Republicans, the total being 18 Republicans and 39 Democrats. In the Senate there are 29 foreign-born entries in the years 1880-91, and of these 21 belong to the Democratic side.

To sum up, then: About one-tenth of the members of the

Legislature today are foreign born ; of this fractional body Ireland furnishes a little more than half. Generally, the Irish contingent will be found in the Democratic column, while the other foreign elements are more evenly divided. These statistics bear out common impressions in regard to the constitution of our legislative body, but it would be interesting to have a similar inquiry made for a Western State, as, for example, Wisconsin, which has a large Teutonic and Scandinavian population.

2. OCCUPATION.

Records of the occupations of the members of the Legislature are less satisfactory than those of nativity. The principal titles under which members are entered are those of lawyers, farmers, manufacturers, and merchants. Other occupations, as clergymen, machinists, editors, physicians, etc., appear in the returns, but there is no uniformity of listing from year to year. It is thus impossible to make comparison which will include all the members ; but in spite of this necessary defect it is possible to note certain general tendencies. Using the same periods of time as in the analysis of nativity, we find the following occupations entered for members of the Senate. The figures are averages derived from the several years in each period.

OCCUPATIONS OF MEMBERS IN SENATE.

	Lawyers.	Farmers.	Manufacturers.	Merchants.
1847-50	10.7	8.7	7.7	5.5
1850-60	8.4	5.6	4.5	6.7
1861-70	10.4	3.3	7.7	5.4
1870-80	10.2	2.5	8.1	5.6
1880-90	9.8	2.2	6.2	3.1

As the Senate generally has had 40 members throughout the period, it will be observed that while in the earlier decades the above categories would include two-thirds of the member-

ship, in the last decade not more than one-half were thus accounted for. There were more who really belong in the mercantile class than appear above, the deficiency being due to a refinement of recording which did not formerly prevail. Lawyers have held their own, as well as the mercantile class, while the farmers have steadily declined in influence.

In the House we find the same tendencies. In the membership of this body until 1855 the farmers had from one-fourth to one-third of the members; but latterly only very rarely in a House of 240 members are there 30 farmers. Lawyers have increased slightly in numbers, and the same is true of manufacturers and merchants. There was formerly a substantial group of clergymen, but now they appear only occasionally. In the period 1847-50 there was, for example, an average of 9.5 clergymen; 1851-60, 7.8; 1861-70, 8.5; 1871-80, 3.5; 1881-90, 1.9.

The following table shows the average number of farmers and lawyers, it not being possible to classify accurately other occupations.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

	Total Members in House.	Farmers.	Lawyers.
1847-50	253-297	72.0	28.5
1851-60	240	82.6	26.7
1861-70	240	37.7	24.5
1871-80	239-240	26.8	27.0
1881-90	237-240	20.8	34.2